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TRIUMPHS OF DIVINE GRACE.

EXEMPLIFIED IN THE LIFE AND DEATH OF

MARSHALL F. CHAPPELL,

A CHILD EIGHT YEARS OF AGE.

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INTRODUCTION.

I ESTEEM it to be among the great and blessed privileges of my life, that I have been long and delightfully associated with the parents of the dear child of whom the following pages speak. In social intercourse and Church fellowship, as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in Baltimore city station, we have been permitted to enjoy uninter-

rupted Christian fellowship. This, together with the fact that his maternal parent has been a member, from the time of her conversion and union with the Church of Christ to the present, of the class I have had the benefit of leading for nearly thirty years, has given me repeated opportunities of becoming intimately acquainted with their little son, who has been thus early taken, from the sorrows and exposures incident to earth, to the joy and security of heavenly rest.

This happy family for many years has resided in the same neighborhood, and in the immediate vicinity

of my own dwelling. Having almost daily intercourse with some one or other of its members, I am thus enabled to speak from personal observation of the character of their loved one. He was indeed a universal favorite, and was esteemed by all who knew him; and lamented truly is his death throughout the neighborhood; much more than is usual in the case of children dying at his age.

This brief memoir has been prepared with a hope that it may be sanctified by the great Head of the Church to the encouragement of par-

ents and Sabbath-school teachers in the performance of the arduous and responsible duties devolving upon them. Amen!

GEORGE C. M. ROBERTS.

BALTIMORE, *June* 16, 1854.

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MARSHALL F. CHAPPELL.

CHAPTER I.

HIS BRIEF LIFE.

This dearly beloved child, Marshall Fonerden Chappell, was the son and youngest child of Mr. John G. and Priscilla E. Chappell; and was born in the city of Baltimore, on the 4th of December, 1845. Until his fifth year he was remarkable for his healthful and robust appearance; after this he grew tall and slender,

and, though never seriously ill, manifested signs which indicated that his constitution was not vigorous. Because of this, he was not sent to school until he was seven years old. From that period his mental improvement was much greater than is usual in children of so tender an age. He formed a strong attachment for his books and school, and specially for his teacher: he never spoke of her but with great respect and affection.

When about five years old, he was placed in the infant department of the Sunday school, attached to the Light-street Church, and con-

tinued connected with this school until his death. He manifested great interest in the hymns and lessons therein taught, committing them to memory with peculiar promptness.

In the neighborhood in which he lived he was esteemed for his manly, frank, and unassuming manners, and his proper, yet child-like, conduct; so much so, that he was a very desirable and approved companion for children of his age.

CHAPTER II.

RELIGIOUS CHARACTER.

MARSHALL's marked fondness for the house of God, and its services on the holy Sabbath, was another admirable trait in his character. He generally sat beside his father, and, from the commencement until the close of the discourse, gave unwearied attention to the minister, rarely ever removing his eyes from him until the conclusion of the sermon.

During the protracted meeting, which was lately in progress for

several weeks, at Wesley Chapel, he was the companion of his father. He frequently sat within the altar, and seemed deeply interested in the services customary among us as a people during seasons of revival. It was his custom to have his hymn-book in hand, and to unite in singing such hymns as were familiar to him.

He sometimes accompanied his mother to class. During the whole of the services, he seemed to give the most uninterrupted heed to all that was said and done. As a source of encouragement to him, whenever he was present, I was in

the habit of calling his name. This seemed to gratify him exceedingly, and he would instantly come forward, and present a contribution for the support of the gospel, as he saw others do.

CHAPTER III.

AFFECTION AND TRUTHFULNESS.

MARSHALL was tenderly affectionate in his attentions to his parents, and very scrupulous in his endeavors to obey them. After the close of school, and his dismissal, he invariably returned promptly home, and reported himself to his mother, before going out to play, even though no further than the yard attached to the dwelling in which his parents resided. Such was his fear of telling an untruth, that he could not be prevailed

upon to make a promise if he had any doubt of being able to comply with it. I am assured by his dear parents that he was never even known to prevaricate.

His attachment to his brothers and sisters, and also to Miss M. E. P——, the particular friend of his mother, was very ardent; so much so that during his last illness, though suffering intense pain, he would express himself in terms of marked love for them all.

The disease which terminated his life was gastric fever, of a violent grade, which gave rise to constant pain, and of the most acute charac-

ter. Amid it all, his youthful heart was filled with joy, wondrous in its manifestations, and increasingly great, until death sealed his infant lips in silence, and hushed the outpourings of his praise. He died at ten minutes before nine o'clock, on the morning of Tuesday, April 25, 1854, aged eight years, four months, and twenty-one days.

CHAPTER IV.

LAST HOURS.

THE following graphic account of the close of his life is touchingly interesting. It is given as it was written by Miss M. E. P——, the intimate friend of his parents spoken of in the previous chapter.

"I saw the dear boy on Saturday, 22d instant, for the first time for several days; found him, at that moment, perfectly sensible, and was gratified at the pleasure he evinced upon seeing me. He soon became

flighty, and, during the night, wandered greatly in mind; but not without frequent intervals of reason, during which he recognized us all, and talked very sensibly. On one occasion, I was forcibly struck with the extreme caution which he observed not to violate a promise he had made to his mother, even though the circumstances rendered it extremely difficult to keep it. Some time after midnight, he remarked to me that there was something he desired to have, but could not settle in his own mind what it was. I suggested that he had better keep calm, and think awhile, and as

soon as he had determined what it was, I would endeavor to gratify him.

"He said, 'Miss Mary, it is too late to think. Had I taken time to think sooner, it would be better for me now; but now I am no longer able to think.' Then, turning to his father, he said, 'Father, you will have to think for me. I did not think in time, and now I am not able to think for myself. But you must take time, and think what you want me to do; and as soon as you make up your mind let me know, and I will try to do as you wish, even, I believe, if it was to chop off

my head.' He then rested, but talked much in his sleep, and frequently wandered in mind, until about six o'clock on Sabbath morning, when he turned toward his mother, and said, very calmly, 'Ma, I don't believe I shall ever get out again.'

"She replied, 'I fear not, my darling.'

"He said, 'No, I don't believe I ever shall.'

"His mother said, 'But you will be with your heavenly Father.'

"'Yes, I will indeed!' he answered; 'and, instead of having one father, I shall have two, and that is my greatest wish.' He then turned

to his father and said, 'Father, try to sing

"I am happy now,"' &c.

But the father's heart was too full for such an effort, and he could only inquire why such a request was made.

"The little boy clasped his hands, and said, 'Because I never was so happy in my life,—I am going to heaven!'

"His mother said, 'You will have no more pain.'

"'No,' said he, 'there will be no pain there!' Then, clasping his little hands together, he said, 'Father, how shall we ever praise Him?

Glory be to his holy name, I shall see my Saviour there,—I shall see my Saviour there! And I know he died for me!'

"By this time Dr. Roberts, who had been sent for to witness the scene, drew near the bedside. The dear child immediately recognized him, and, calling him distinctly by name, said, 'Doctor, I shall see the Saviour there, and I shall see you there too.' He then spoke of having seen the doctor before, repeatedly remarking that they would meet above. He then put his arms round his father's neck, and said, 'My precious father, I love you dearly!

But He loves you too, and I shall see you there.' Turning to his mother, he discovered her tears, and said, 'Ma, do n't do so; I do n't want you to grieve. Give me a handkerchief: I want to cough,—I do n't want to cry; I have nothing to cry for. Neither do I want to laugh, for there is nothing to laugh about.'

"He often raised his little hands, and, with the deepest solemnity, said, 'Glory be to his holy name!'* Turning to his young brother, he said, 'Put your trust in Him who made you; and, if you try, you will see the Saviour there!'

* See Frontispiece.

"He then turned to his mother, and said, calmly, 'Ma, don't you be afraid: I shall see you there! I never shall forget the day, in the dining-room, when you said it was time Eddie had religion; and you did not think I was too young, but wished I was like that little boy that was just my age: and I never shall forget this time either, in all the days of my life,—I mean in all the hours and seconds of my life.' His mother remembered having given this advice two months before.

"He constantly mingled his remarks with, 'Glory be to His holy name! I see the blessed angels,

and I shall see the Saviour!' He then said, 'Ma, I believe my name is written in the Lamb's book of life. You know Mr. Register said the Lamb's book of life.' His father whispered to Dr. Roberts, 'He did not listen in vain.' Marshall caught the sound, and, turning to his sister, said, 'If you listen, *you* will obtain, sure and certain; and if you try to do right, you will see the Saviour there.' He then continued to clasp his hands, and lisp words of praise to God. "Dr. R. offered prayer, and at its close, after having listened attentively, Marshall said, 'Amen!' after which he fell asleep from exhaustion."

CHAPTER V.

TRIUMPHANT DEATH.

"During the day, on Sunday, his suffering was intense, and it seemed impossible for his mind to be at any moment calm. He was either delirious or in great agony. Several times, however, he inquired if we would not try to do something to relieve him, always adding, 'Whoever blesses me, the Lord will bless.'

"On Monday the same state of things continued all day. Once he

reminded his mother that he was the only little boy she had. He frequently expressed his affection for his parents, and remarked to his father that he wished him to have all he owned in the world, &c., and said, 'I'm going home.'

"His father said, 'I know, my darling boy; you are going to be with Jesus.'

"Marshall replied, 'Indeed I am, —indeed I am! I am going to be with my Saviour!'

"About eleven o'clock on Monday night he asked us to sing; but, in the excitement of feeling, memory failed us, and we could think of

nothing to sing. He said, 'I think you might sing. Sing something,—I do n't care what; but I will be so thankful if you will only do it.'

"I asked him to select a tune, and he said, 'Sing

"Send converting power down, &c."'

"We could not remember it, but finally sang

'There is a happy land,' &c.

He joined in, and distinctly sang,

'Where saints in glory stand,
Bright, bright as day!
O, they shall happy be.'

But his strength failed, and he sang no more. After sleeping a short

time, he roused again, and said, 'Sing the "King of Glory."' Before we could comply, nature was exhausted, and he again slept. His mind wandered, his sufferings increased, and at three o'clock on Tuesday morning he lost his speech, and lingered in great agony until ten minutes before nine, when death came to his relief."

Thus closed most brilliantly, in its early morning, a life which had almost from its very dawn betokened a future, in this world, full of promise, to the Church of God in particular, and to society in general.

Who would not rejoice to be the

parent of such a child? And what parent could murmur in having returned to God such a lamb, to be secure forever in the heavenly fold? Nay more, what parent could refrain from rejoicing at the issue, seeing that God so thoroughly mingled the cup of affliction with mercies unspeakable and full of glory: for it must be remembered that his triumph in death, and each and every word that fell from his lips, were the immediate result of divine grace. Not a word, directly or indirectly, was spoken by any one, to induce such an outburst of heavenly feeling. At the time of its first

manifestation nothing had occurred to remind him of anything that had *a tendency* to lead to such a state of things. Indeed, his friends were themselves struck with wonder, and mute with astonishment, as they sat around, listening to the language he uttered, and beholding the brilliant expression of every lineament of his countenance, beaming with heavenly light. The scene was well calculated to call to mind what is said, in Acts vi, 15, of the appearance of the protomartyr Stephen a few moments before he closed his earthly labors, under the most trying circumstances: "And all that sat in the

council, looking steadfastly on him, saw his face as it had been the face of an angel."

So near was this saint of God to the inheritance on high, that the light of the upper sanctuary fell upon his face, and was reflected upon the eyes of his astonished accusers and murderers. So also was it with this infant sufferer; and so full and clear, that his friends and relatives were lost in wonder, gratitude, and praise!

CHAPTER VI.

CONSOLATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT TO PARENTS.

In the death of this dear boy, with its attendant circumstances, there was everything to comfort and sustain his parents and friends in their trying and unexpected bereavement. This brief statement of a few of the prominent features in his character, and the gloriously triumphant manner in which he met death, is suggestive of lessons of the utmost importance and encouragement to

parents and Sabbath-school teachers. Alas! it is too often the case that we rarely appreciate as we should the fact, that children of the *tenderest ages* are susceptible of impressions which produce the most lasting results, either for happiness or woe. Youth is indeed the spring-time of life,—the very best period for proper culture. It should be seized upon, and consecrated to the most unwearied efforts for good in both worlds, before the ground is preoccupied by the devil and the world, and the most noxious seeds sown,—seeds which too frequently spring up and luxuriate before their existence

is scarcely known, and lead to the extinguishment of the liveliest hopes, and the blasting of the brightest prospects, ere the sun of life has reached its meridian. It is ours to labor uninterruptedly, both early and late; to labor, too, without the slightest discouragement, even though signs of success be imperceptible, trusting in God for that which will, soon or late, be made manifest.

The feeblest effort to instill truth into the youthful mind is *never lost.* We may suppose it is; but it never can be. He who said, in the days of his earthly pilgrimage, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and

forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of heaven," has given us in this the pledge, that no effort to direct them in the right way can ever be lost. A single expression of a pious and devoted mother, apparently casually spoken, fell upon the ear and mind of the dear child with a power that he never ceased to feel, and made an impression which, in the last moments of his life, and in the midst of agonies too intense to be expressed in words, contributed to swell the joys that were then filling his infant heart, and bursting from his lips in strains of praise, sweet as angels

use. No language can portray the agonizing sufferings of the last four days and nights of his life. So also is it impossible to describe the patience and resignation, the more than human endurance, evinced by the dear little sufferer. Not one murmuring wórd or complaint escaped his lips.

Christian father, and Christian mother, take courage! Let nothing cause you to falter for a moment in meeting the duty devolved upon you by the great Head of the Church. He has intrusted you with training, for his own glory and the good of mankind, those who are

destined to mightiest achievements, if you but be faithful to the trust reposed in you. What, though dark clouds sometimes darken the prospect,—what, though the night be long, and no trace of coming light arise, to cheer you onward in your noble work,—remember the most fearful storm has its termination, the darkest cloud its moment to be dissolved. The most dreary and cheerless night will soon be followed by the rising, cheerful light of the coming morn, with its brilliant sun. What, though God, in his providence, may even *remove you* from the theater of action, and

your field of labor, before this long expected and ardently prayed for period shall arrive,—remember that the feeblest effort can never fail, and the seed must vegetate which is sown in the name and in the strength of Him who loved a ruined world, even unto his own death, when a darker and more dreary night enveloped it than has ever enshrouded those you love, and for whom you labor. Your head *may* be laid low in the grave; your spirit *may first* be gathered to its rest, amid the company which wait its coming beyond the flood: all this may be true, and doubtless is

often the case. It should not, however, operate to your discouragement for a single moment. The word of God is so sure, that a child, trained "in the way in which he should go," will never finally be lost.

CHAPTER VII.

REMARKABLE ANSWER TO PRAYER.

A FEW years ago, when recovering from a painful and protracted illness, a pious father one morning entered my chamber, his countenance beaming with delight, and tears of joy falling from his eyes. He put into my hand a letter. It was from a wayward boy, who had wandered long and far from the path of rectitude. For his salvation, a father and a mother's prayers had often and continuedly gone up be-

fore the mercy-seat. Early in life he had fallen "among thieves, and they had stripped him." The counsels of his parents, and the labors of his Sabbath-school teachers, all seemed of no avail. He left his home, and enlisted in the naval service of his country as an ordinary seaman. At much cost and effort, his father obtained his release, and brought him to his home again. Not many months after he shipped himself, in the merchant service, as a sailor before the mast.

Not knowing what more could be done, his father yielded to advice given, and suffered him to follow

the sea, for which he seemed to have an unconquerable attachment.

Months and years passed on without bringing the tokens of a better day, throughout the length of which prayer was poured into the ears of Him who has promised that "they should be open to the supplications of those" who continue confidently to look to and trust in him.

The last night of the year 18—, after services in the house of God had been concluded, a few followers of the Saviour repaired to the dwelling of this troubled father, for the purpose of spending a half hour in social intercourse. At its close,

prayer was offered; and, among other things, the case of this youth was pressed with fervor, and laid upon the altar. God was so manifestly near, that another, and still another, was asked to "call upon the name of the Lord."

Months passed away, and at length this letter came from the wanderer, from a foreign port, to cheer stricken hearts at home. It contained a statement of the circumstances connected with his awakening and conversion.

It was at midnight, and on the bosom of the mighty ocean. The night was clear and unclouded. No

breath of air seemed to disturb the placid face of the vast expanse of waters, spread out and around the ship in every direction. It was his watch on deck, and his companions were at rest below. The stars were holding their evening festivals above him; and the moon, with borrowed splendor, enthroned on high, was looking down upon her own pale image, mirrored in the sea beneath. It was an hour peculiarly appropriate for reflection, all nature being hushed in silence. The Spirit of his God, and his father's God, once more spoke in power, in the very elements of his being.

He thought of his folly; he thought of the years of pain and sorrow he had caused his parents. Lessons, early taught him at home, and in the Sabbath school, were brought to his memory again. He looked up, and fancied that the spirit of his little brother (who, like Marshall F. Chappell, had early in life departed, in triumph, to his rest on high) was bending from the skies, and reproaching him for the grief he had caused his nearest and dearest earthly friends. It was enough: he fell on his knees upon the deck of the ship, and, with broken heart, in the depth of true penitence, he con-

fessed his sin, and plead for pardon at the hand of God.

Being acquainted, theoretically, with the plan of redemption, it was not long before he was enabled, by faith, to rest his soul upon the promise of his Lord, and the atoning merit of a Saviour's blood. In that very moment he heard the voice of the Spirit saying to him, in language that could not be mistaken or misunderstood, "Son, go in peace, and sin no more: thy sins, which were many, are all forgiven thee." His night was turned into day,—his sorrow into joy. Such was the power of the mighty change wrought with-

in him, that he shouted, at the top of his voice, the praise of God, so long and so loud that it roused some of his companions from their sleep, and they came hastily up to the deck, to ascertain whence these strange noises proceeded.

Who that understands even but partially the effects of redeeming grace, can for a moment wonder at the transporting joy which filled the father's heart, and caused tears of gratitude to fall from his eyes, as he handed the letter which contained this cheering intelligence to one who he was well persuaded knew all the waywardness of this

boy, and deeply sympathized with him.

Parents, take courage, and devote yourselves afresh to the work committed to you. Your children shall be given to your prayers.

Sunday-school teachers, redouble your diligence in laboring to win souls for Christ.

In view of the simple facts which these pages set forth, who can despair?—who can fear?—who can doubt? "Beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord; forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

LINES BY MRS. G. A. HULSE M'LEOD,

ON THE DEATH OF MARSHALL FONERDEN CHAPPELL: WRITTEN AS THE FUNERAL PROCESSION WAS PASSING FROM HIS DWELLING.

They are bearing thee, thou bright one,
To thy long and dreamless rest;
But thy blessed spirit leaneth
On the dear Redeemer's breast.
Thou wert but lent, a brief, brief space,
Unto this earthly home,
To make more beautiful the path
To that which thou hast won.

Like angel-whispers thrilling,
Come back those words of thine,
When thy young face seem'd glorious
With light almost divine.
Thy lisping tongue gave utterance
To words of deep, strange power;
An inspiration given thee
To mark thy dying hour.

"In the Lamb's book of life,
My name is written there,"—
For the death's shadowy vale
Had naught to waken fear.

"I see the Saviour, mother!—
I hear the angels sing!"
That music thou hast gone to learn,—
Praises of God, our King.

"Unto my heavenly Father
I know that I shall go."
O! is not this sweet comfort
To those who weep below?
Thine be the angel presence
Ever about their way;
Thy holy influence be their guide
To realms of endless day.

God comfort those who mourn thee;
A blessed link is riven,—
But O remember what a gem
Is given back to Heaven!
A gem of peerless value
For the dear Saviour's crown;
A dove of spotless beauty
Back to the skies is flown!

THE END.

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